

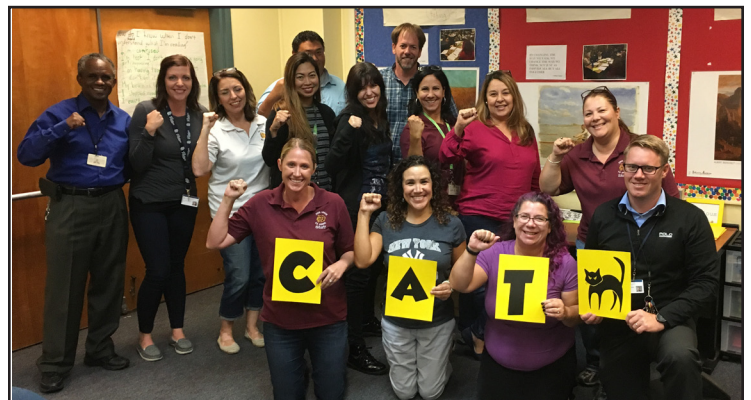
THE ADVOCATE

CATs carry the day on Nov. 8 and beyond

By the time you read this, thousands of SDEA members at nearly every one of the 150 schools in San Diego Unified will have rallied for a L.E.A.R.N. contract as part of our union-wide Nov. 8 Pop-Up Picket—probably including you! The Pop-Up Picket was the culmination of Wave 1 of our L.E.A.R.N. campaign, with two more waves to come if the Superintendent and School Board still won't settle a fair contract.

Wave 1 included union organizing meetings at 150 schools, the collection of thousands of educator and parent signatures on our L.E.A.R.N. petition to the Superintendent and School Board, and the delivery of those petitions by the SDEA bargaining team at the bargaining table.

But the greatest success of our Wave 1 organizing is the creation of new Contract Action Teams (CATs) at almost every single school. Member leaders like each school's Association Representative (AR) are the backbone of SDEA. But ARs can't do the work of our union alone, especially not as we prepare for the loss of "fair share" and the coming attacks on our School Board by charter school lobbyists, as we just saw in Los Angeles. By stepping up to support ARs in winning a strong contract, CATs are making our union stronger. A stronger union means not only a better contract, but a better chance for public education to survive the coordinated threats we face. If you see a CAT member today, give them a high five!



CATs big and small made our Pop-Up Picket on Nov. 8 a success! Clockwise from top: CAT members at Madison HS, Pacific View Leadership Elem., Logan K-8 and Crown Point Elem. make our union strong.



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The SDEA Advocate is published monthly by the San Diego Education Association and paid for in full by advertising revenue. Advertising rates are available upon request.

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Protecting our schools is up to us

It is hard to believe we have already been in school for over 55 days! Thank you for all your hard work and dedication through the heat and craziness of the start of a school year!

During these first few months, SDEA leaders and staff have conducted Wave 1 union organizing meetings at 150 schools, where we have had powerful conversations about the current attacks on public education and the fight for a contract that supports the schools ALL our students deserve. We have talked with and listened to over 2,000 members and gathered thousands of signatures in support of our L.E.A.R.N. bargaining campaign and Nov. 8 Pop-Up Picket. As a result of SDEA members' powerful collective action, the District has backed off on attacks to our healthcare, administrative transfer rights and elementary preparation time. We are continuing to increase the pressure on the district to settle a FAIR contract, settle a contract our STUDENTS and EDUCATORS deserve, and settle it NOW.

Part of our Wave 1 conversations have been preparing ourselves for an almost certain attack on public sector unions through the Supreme Court this spring. As you all know by now, public sector unions are under attack at the national level with the *Janus v. AFSCME* case that is currently at the Supreme Court. The goal with *Janus* (as it was in *Friedrichs v. CTA*) is no secret: The people financing it want to use the Supreme Court to take away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions, because unions give workers a powerful voice in speaking up for ourselves, our families and our communities. Unions have played a critical role in building and protecting the middle class in America. Unions provide hard working people economic stability for our families and give us the tools to build a good life, home and education for ourselves and our children.

When union membership is high, entire communities enjoy wages that represent a fair return on their work and greater social and economic mobility. Unions use our collective voices to advocate for policies that benefit all working people—like increases to the minimum wage, affordable health care, and great public schools. Unions provide a path to the



Members at Field Elem. are on board for Wave 1!

middle class for working people by increasing our income and establishing the economic security of our families. As union membership has decreased because of attacks on working people, income inequality has risen in the U.S. Through collective bargaining, members of strong unions are scoring victories that help entire communities—like safer nurse-staffing levels that help patients and smaller classroom sizes that help students.

As we move out of Wave 1 of our SDEA union meetings and into Wave 2, we will continue to focus on winning a strong contract, but we must also focus on ensuring that our fellow educators are aware of the importance of our union, our collective power and what could happen if that collective power is weakened. The best way to strengthen our membership is through one-on-one conversations with fellow educators who are both members and non-members. When people hear from their friends and colleagues about the power of the union, they are more likely to stay active, engaged and maintain membership.

We challenge all of you in the next month to have at least five conversations with fellow educators and talk about why you are a member of SDEA and why you are committed to staying a member as we fight to protect public education and build the schools ALL our STUDENTS and EDUCATORS deserve!

Together We ARE Stronger!

Lindsay Burningham
Lindsay Burningham
SDEA President

Kisha Borden
Kisha Borden
SDEA Vice President

Charter schools: A bad tax investment

In “Spending Blind”, a report released earlier this year by In the Public Interest, University of Oregon professor Gordon Lafer found that the public has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on charter school buildings in California, yet the state has little to show for it.

In 1998, there were 200 charter schools in California. Now we have more than 1,200 charter schools. The charter school industry serves nearly 10% of our state’s students.

In the past 15 years, charter schools, which are privately operated, have received \$2.5 billion in public dollars or taxpayer subsidized financing to lease, build, or buy facilities. Yet much of this investment has gone to schools built in neighborhoods that don’t need them and schools that perform worse—according to

charter industry standards—than nearby traditional public schools.

The public has provided California’s under-performing charter schools—an astounding three-quarters of all the state’s charter schools—with an estimated \$750 million in direct funding. Public support has even gone to California charter schools that discriminate against students with poor academic records, limited English-speaking skills, or disabilities. The public has given a collective \$195 million to the 253 schools found by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California (ACLU) in August 2016 to have discriminatory enrollment policies.

Especially alarming is the fact that much of the funding has gone to a handful of large charter school chains, and

some have used the money to purchase private property. In Los Angeles, for example, the Alliance College-Ready Public Schools network of charter schools has used subsidiary corporations to build a growing empire of privately owned real estate now worth in excess of \$200 million. State and federal taxpayers have given Alliance more than \$110 million in support, yet, because of a loophole, the schools built with these funds will never belong to the public.

Local school boards, who are democratically elected, have little say in whether a new charter school is good for their community’s students. The boards charged with authorizing new charters aren’t allowed to consider the impacts on existing public schools—or whether a school is even needed. On top of that, the

public is subsidizing failing and discriminatory charter schools to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Unfortunately, the costs are being borne out by students. Like many across the country, California’s public school districts need more resources—for things like classroom supplies, safe buildings, and training for teachers. But due to a severe lack of regulation, hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars have gone to school buildings we don’t need, schools that discriminate, and charter school chains that are fattening their bank accounts. If you or someone you know would like to share your story of how charter schools are impacting our students, please contact Clare Crawford from In the Public Interest at ccrawford@inthepublicinterest.org.

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Hands off my prep!

SDEA members can be required to cover other teachers’ classes during their prep time, but only in an emergency. An emergency is any situation which could not reasonably be anticipated. For example, a scheduling conflict for a meeting is not an emergency. The number of prep periods spent doing emergency class coverage should be “reasonable and equitable.” Only the principal, not a co-worker or colleague, can “request” that you perform emergency class coverage. The contract rights on emergency class coverage apply to elementary and secondary educators equally. New language negotiated in 2015 includes the right to pay if you must cover PLC’s or PD’s during your preparation period. If you volunteer to cover these

events during your prep time, you are entitled to pay, after the first hour of such coverage. The same rights apply to visiting teachers who are asked to work during the prep period of the teacher they are subbing for.

Additionally, secondary members may be required to attend a “reasonable” number of prep period meetings, per Section 8.7.2. While “reasonable” is not explicitly defined for prep period meetings, a Memorandum of Understanding defines a “reasonable” number of meetings outside of the 6-hour and 35-minute workday as three per month. Secondary members who are directed to attend prep period meetings once a week or more often are encouraged to work with your site AR to initiate a grievance.

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THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING YOUR HEALTH CARE PLAN:

- Do you take any regular medications or prescriptions?
- Do you have a preferred Primary Care Provider (PCP)?
- What medical group is your preferred provider in?
- Do you see any specialists that are outside of your PCP's medical group?
- What are your medical needs for the coming year? Do you plan to get pregnant, have surgery, etc?
- Do you have a dependent outside of the covered area?
- Does the plan include a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA)?

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